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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/693,179	10/23/2003	Nael A. Al-Abdulla	58443 (71699)	2620
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EDWARDS ANGELL PALMER & DODGE LLP				
P.O. BOX 55874				
BOSTON, MA 02205				
EXAMINER				
KIDWELL, MICHELE M				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3761				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
11/24/2009		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/693,179

Applicant(s)

AL-ABDULLA ET AL.

Examiner

Michele Kidwell

Art Unit

3761

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 November 2009.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 5, 7-17, 19-49 and 51-58 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 5, 7-17, 19-49 and 51-58 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on November 11, 2009 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 1 – 3, 5, 7 – 17, 19 – 49 and 51 – 58 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cohen (US 4,175,704) in view of Goddard (US 5,059,188).

With respect to claim 1, Cohen discloses a device for the delivery of a substance to the eye comprising: a housing (12) for holding the substance and a non-aerosol, non-electric (abstract) delivery mechanism comprising a tubular member (20) disposed within the housing, an actuation mechanism (30) positioned at the top of the housing, and at least one outlet port (34) in the actuation mechanism in communication with the tubular member, wherein the delivery mechanism is configured such that substance is delivered from the housing, through the tubular member, through the outlet port, and delivered to the eye in the form of a spray or mist in a substantially horizontal direction (figures 2 and 4) as set forth in col. 2, lines 25 – 60 and in the figures.

It is noted that the dimensions as claimed may be equivalent to zero, and therefore do not necessarily need to be present in order to meet the claimed limitations. Further, it is noted that the device need only to be “configured to” provide

the dimensions and/or functions as claimed. Nevertheless, Cohen does not explicitly recite maximum dimensions.

Goddard teaches a device for delivering substances to the eye that delivers the substance from nozzle hole opening with a diameter of 1 - 2 mm as set forth in col. 3, lines 23 – 24.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the nozzle hole opening of Cohen by providing it with the claimed range since the use of such a range to deliver substances to the eye is known in the art as demonstrated by Goddard and, as the instant specification acknowledges that the average ocular area is about 11 mm in diameter, the incorporations of the dimensions taught by Cohen provides for accurate delivery of the substance to the eye.

Regarding claim 2, see the rejection of claim 1. Additionally, Cohen discloses a device for the delivery of an artificial tears or demulcent composition to the eye comprising: a housing (12) for holding the substance and a non-aerosol, non-electric (abstract) delivery mechanism comprising a tubular member (20) disposed within the housing, an actuation mechanism (30) positioned at the top of the housing, and at least one outlet port (34) in the actuation mechanism in communication with the tubular member, wherein the delivery mechanism is configured such that substance is delivered from the housing, through the tubular member, through the outlet port, and ,delivered to the eye in the form of a spray or mist as set forth in col. 2, lines 25 – 60 and in the figures.

The difference between Cohen and claim 2 is the explicit recitation that the outlet port is configured to deliver the substance in an elliptical shape.

Goddard teaches a device for delivering substances to the eye that delivers the substance from nozzle hole opening in an elliptical shape as set forth in figure 4.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the nozzle hole opening of Cohen by providing it with the shape taught by Goddard since the use of such shape is used to deliver substances to the eye is known in the art as demonstrated by Goddard and the use of such provides for accurate delivery of the substance to the eye.

With reference to claim 3, Cohen discloses a device wherein the force of the spray or mist is sufficient to deliver the spray or mist to the eye without the aid of gravity as set forth in col. 2, lines 61 – 68. The examiner contends that the force is directly related to the amount of pressure applied and may be sufficient to deliver to deliver the spray or mist without the aid of gravity.

As to claim 5, Cohen discloses a device wherein the housing is hollow and the substance is contained within the hollow of the housing as set forth in figure 4.

Regarding claim 7, Cohen discloses a device wherein the housing contains a reservoir that holds the substance as set forth in figures 2 and 4.

As to claims 8 and 9, Cohen discloses a device wherein the housing is fabricated of a rigid material, which would be of sufficient thickness to prevent collapse of the housing during use, as set forth in col. 2, lines 11 – 16.

With respect to claim 10, see col. 2, lines 11 - 12.

With reference to claim 11, Cohen discloses a device wherein the housing is cylindrical in shape as set forth in figure 2.

With respect to claims 12 – 17, see col. 5, lines 5 – 19 of Goddard.

Regarding claims 19 and 20, Cohen discloses a device wherein the actuation mechanism is movable with respect to the housing in order to deliver the substance to the eye as set forth in col. 3, lines 10 – 17. The examiner contends that the manner by which the actuation mechanism is moved is considered a product-by-process limitation that does not patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art.

As to claim 21, Cohen discloses a device wherein the actuation mechanism includes a spray nozzle (34) as set forth in figure 2.

With reference to claims 22 – 23, see the rejection of claims 19 – 21.

Regarding claims 24 – 27, see the abstract.

As to claims 28 – 29 and 32, the examiner contends that Cohen discloses the invention as claimed.

A recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim. The invention of Burke is fully capable of performing the recited function.

As to claim 30, see col. 2, lines 61 – 68.

Regarding claim 31, see col. 3, lines 10 – 17.

With reference to claim 33, Burke discloses a device further comprising an extension (60) substantially or completely surrounding the outlet port and extending in the direction that the spray or mist is delivered wherein the extension assists in directing the substance to the eye and assists in preventing the substance from being delivered to areas outside of the eye as set forth in figures 7 – 8.

As to claim 34, see the rejection of claim 3.

As to claim 35, see the rejection of claim 2.

As to claims 36 and 37, see the abstract.

As to claim 38, see the rejection of claim 4.

With reference to claims 39 – 41, see the rejection of claims 19 – 20.

As to claim 42, see col. 3, lines 10 – 17 and the abstract.

With reference to claim 43, see the rejection of claim 27.

With reference to claims 44 – 47, see the rejection of claims 28 – 29 and 32.

As to claim 48, see col. 6, lines 33 – 45.

Regarding claim 49, see the rejection of claims 1 and 2. Likewise, Goddard provides a means that prevents contact with the eye as set forth in figure 7.

As to claims 51 and 52, the examiner contends that any device may be considered reusable and/or disposable.

With reference to claims 53 – 56, see col. 3, lines 51 – 54.

As to claims 57 and 58, see the rejection of claims 1 and 2.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed November 11, 2009 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In response to applicant's argument that there is no suggestion to combine the references, the examiner recognizes that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, both Cohen and Goddard are within the same field of endeavor. While the system disclosed by Goddard may differ from that of Cohen, it is noted that the system of Goddard is not relied upon for the rejection. The system including a device that administers a material to an eye with a nozzle hole opening is taught by Cohen as set forth in the rejection. Goddard is simply relied upon to support the general knowledge in the art of providing a device that administers a material to an eye with a nozzle hole opening having a specific diameter. Likewise, as set forth in the rejection, it is noted that the device need only to be "configured to" provide the dimensions and/or functions as claimed

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michele Kidwell whose telephone number is 571-272-4935. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tatyana Zalukaeva can be reached on 571-272-1115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Michele Kidwell/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3761